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PHOTOGRAPHIC
INTERPRETATION
REPORT

NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC
INTERPRETATION CENTER

SS-X-16 ASSOCIATED FRAMEWORK AT PLESETSK, BRONNITSY, AND VOLGOGRAD, USSR

~~Top Secret~~

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APRIL 1975
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SS-X-16 ASSOCIATED FRAMEWORK AT PLESETSK, BRONNITSY, AND VOLGOGRAD, USSR

ABSTRACT

1. A significant photo interpretation signature associated with the SS-X-16/20 missile program has been identified at Plesetsk, Bronnitsy, and Volgograd. This signature consists of a framework It has been seen on a railcar at the Plesetsk Missile Handling Facility and mounted on a wheeled chassis at Bronnitsy Probable Vehicle Test Support Facility and Volgograd Remote Test Facility 3 . A framework similar in appearance and dimensions has been seen at Kapustin Yar Missile Receiving/Inspection/Storage Area

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2. A schematic drawing of the framework on the railcar and three photographs are included in this report.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

3. Additional information has become available on a unique framework associated with the SS-X-16/20 research and development (R&D) program. This framework was seen on a railcar at Plesetsk that was designated railcar A in a previous NPIC publication.[1] It was observed uncovered in the SS-X-16 receiving and checkout area of the Plesetsk Missile Handling Facility

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4. The framework The flatcar which supports A solid-appearing object is within the framework at one end of the flatcar. The framework overhangs the flatcar by at the end with the solid-appearing object and at the other end. The framework over most of its length.

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5. The configuration of this framework is unique. The shadow that the framework projects aided in the identification of vehicles probably associated with the SS-X-16/20 at three other locations in the USSR. One vehicle was seen at the Bronnitsy Probable Vehicle Test Support Facility in October 1972 (Figure 3). This facility has been involved in the initial road testing of numerous military vehicles, including what may be the transporter-erector-launcher or resupply vehicle for a new short-range ballistic missile now under development at Kapustin Yar.

6. Vehicles with a framework similar to that seen at Bronnitsy and on the railcar at Plesetsk were seen on several occasions at and near Volgograd Remote Test Facility 3. one such vehicle (Figure 4) was on the road between the test facility and Volgograd Steel and Machine Plant Krasnyy Barrikada the SS-X-16 program.

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7. A framework similar in appearance and dimensions to the frameworks at Plesetsk, Bronnitsy, and Volgograd has also been seen at Kapustin Yar Missile Receiving/Inspection/Storage Area. On , approximately two months before the first test launch of the SS-X-20 from Kapustin Yar, this framework was seen on a hardstand in front of the receiving buildings. If this framework is the same as that seen at the other locations, it would indicate the SS-X-20 may use the same framework and, consequently, some of the same ground support equipment as the SS-X-16. This is supported by the presence of the probable SS-X-16, 50-foot van truck at the Kapustin Yar General Support Area

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8. The vehicles seen at Bronnitsy and Volgograd are probably either the transporter-loader or the erector-launcher for the SS-X-16/20. This identification is based at least partially on the similarity of the frameworks mounted on those vehicles to the framework on the railcar in the SS-X-16 area at Plesetsk.

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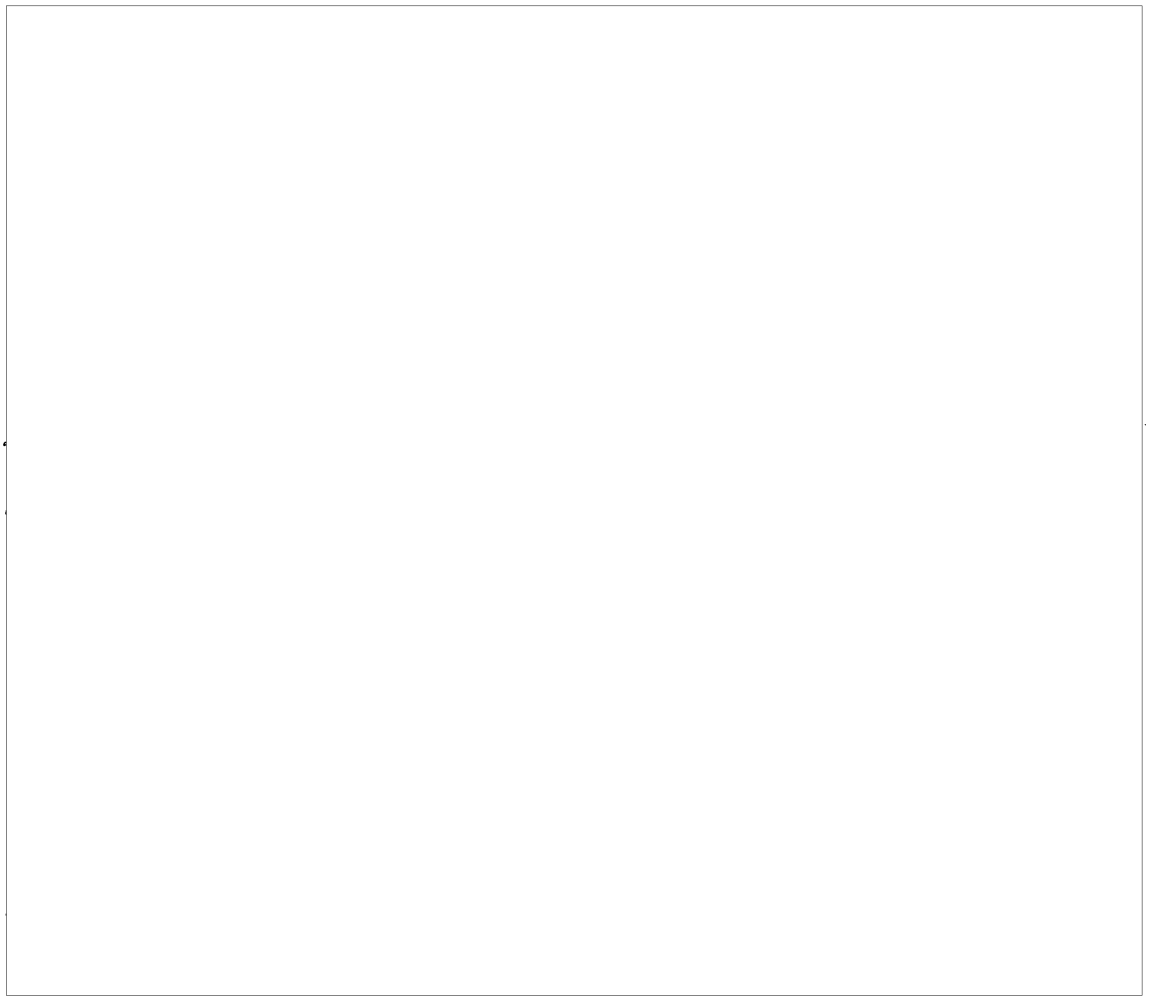

9. The function of the framework on the Plesetsk railcar is unclear. The height of the framework seems to indicate that an SS-X-16 canister cannot fit between the flatbed railcar and the top of the framework unless the framework can be hydraulically lifted. In addition, no SS-X-16 launches have been detected from the western side of the rangehead, the only area that is rail served. These two pieces of information tend to mitigate against the SS-X-16 canister being shipped in this railcar and against Soviet testing of a rail-launched version of the SS-X-16. Perhaps the framework is merely shipped on the railcar. In this case, the vehicle chassis would have to be shipped separately and mated to the framework at a support base, a hypothesis that seems to be supported by the identification of the similar framework at Kapustin Yar.

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REFERENCES

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DOCUMENT

1. NPIC IN-004/74, *Railcars Possibly Associated With the SS-X-16 Program*, USSR, Jan 74 (TOP SECRET RUFF

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